

NAVAL WAR COLLEGE  
Newport, R.I.

THE COAST GUARD IS CAPABLE OF CONDUCTING AND LEADING  
EXPEDITIONARY HARBOR DEFENSE/PORT SECURITY AND HARBOR  
APPROACH DEFENSE OPERATIONS

by

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A paper submitted to the Faculty of the Naval War College in partial satisfaction of the requirements of the Department of Joint Military Operations.

The contents of this paper reflect my own personal views and are not necessarily endorsed by the Naval War College, the Department of the Navy, the Department of Transportation, or the United States Coast Guard.

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05 February 2001

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# REPORT DOCUMENTATION PAGE

1. Report Security Classification: UNCLASSIFIED			
2. Security Classification Authority:			
3. Declassification/Downgrading Schedule:			
4. Distribution/Availability of Report: DISTRIBUTION STATEMENT A: APPROVED FOR PUBLIC RELEASE; DISTRIBUTION IS UNLIMITED.			
5. Name of Performing Organization: JOINT MILITARY OPERATIONS DEPARTMENT			
6. Office Symbol: C		7. Address: NAVAL WAR COLLEGE 686 CUSHING ROAD NEWPORT, RI 02841-1207	
8. Title (Include Security Classification): THE COAST GUARD IS CAPABLE OF CONDUCTING AND LEADING EXPEDITIONARY HARBOR DEFENSE/PORT SECURITY AND HARBOR APPROACH DEFENSE OPERATIONS (U)			
9. Personal Authors: Lieutenant Commander Scott N. Decker, USCG			
10. Type of Report: FINAL		11. Date of Report: 05 FEB 2001	
12. Page Count: 32 12A Paper Advisor (if any):			
13. Supplementary Notation: A paper submitted to the Faculty of the NWC in partial satisfaction of the requirements of the JMO Department. The contents of this paper reflect my own personal views and are not necessarily endorsed by the NWC, the Department of the Navy, the Department of Transportation, or the United States Coast Guard.			
14. Ten key words that relate to your paper: Coast Guard, naval coastal warfare, harbor approach defense, port security			
15. Abstract: <p>With the recent successes in Desert Shield/Desert Storm, combatant CINCs are looking more and more to the U.S. Coast Guard for its maritime interdiction and harbor defense expertise to protect U.S. military forces operating in and from the littorals. Assessing the strengths and vulnerabilities of its assets to the naval coastal warfare mission, this paper demonstrates that the Coast Guard does bring a unique, flexible and cost-effective force to the littoral battle space and is a perfect match to lead expeditionary naval coastal warfare operations. By utilizing the Coast Guard, joint force commanders can free up their limited number of high-end naval combatants for offensive operations and achieve unity of effort.</p>			
16. Distribution / Availability of Abstract:	Unclassified  X	Same As Rpt	DTIC Users
17. Abstract Security Classification: UNCLASSIFIED			
18. Name of Responsible Individual: CHAIRMAN, JOINT MILITARY OPERATIONS DEPARTMENT			
19. Telephone: 841-6461		20. Office Symbol: C	

Security Classification of This Page Unclassified

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## ABBREVIATIONS

AtoN	Aids to Navigation
HAD	Harbor Approach Defense
HD/PS	Harbor Defense/Port Security
HDC/U	Harbor Defense Command/Unit
HVA	High Value Asset
LEDET	Law Enforcement Detachment
LIC	Low Intensity Conflict
LORAN	Long Range Radio Aids to Navigation
MCM	Mine Countermeasures
MDZ	Maritime Defense Zone
MOA	Memorandum of Agreement
MTT	Mobile Training Team
NAVGARD Board	Navy-Coast Guard Board
NCW	Naval Coastal Warfare
NCWC	Naval Coastal Warfare Commander
NCWG	Naval Coastal Warfare Group
PSU	Port Security Unit
TEP	Theater Engagement Plan
VBSS Team	Visit, Board, Search and Seize Team
WHEC	Coast Guard High Endurance Cutter
WMEC	Coast Guard Medium Endurance Cutter
WPB	Coast Guard Patrol Boat

## **ABSTRACT**

### **THE COAST GUARD IS CAPABLE OF CONDUCTING AND LEADING EXPEDITIONARY HARBOR DEFENSE/PORT SECURITY AND HARBOR APPROACH DEFENSE OPERATIONS**

Without a peer competitor In the present post-Cold War era, the United States has shifted its national security focus to regional threats and the potential for U.S. forward deployed forces to be involved in operations up to and including low intensity conflict. As a result, the Department of Defense and combatant commanders-in-chief (CINCs) are seeking new ways of doing business. With the recent successes in Desert Shield/Desert Storm, CINCs are looking more and more to the U.S. Coast Guard for its maritime interdiction and harbor defense expertise to protect U.S. military forces operating in and from the littorals.

Assessing the strengths and vulnerabilities of its assets to the naval coastal warfare mission, this paper demonstrates that the Coast Guard does bring a unique, flexible and cost-effective force to the littoral battle space and is a perfect match to lead expeditionary naval coastal warfare operations. By utilizing the Coast Guard, joint force commanders can free up their limited number of high-end naval combatants for offensive operations, thereby achieving unity of effort.

## INTRODUCTION

"Most fundamentally, the President and the Unified CINCs require a full range of capabilities to meet tomorrow's maritime challenges. In this regard, the Coast Guard must be seen as an at-sea, operating "force in being", trained and capable of many important OOTW tasks, small scale contingency operations, and littoral warfare tasks... that complement Navy vessels."

- Vice Admiral Thomas Fargo, USN and Rear Admiral Ernest Riutta, USCG<sup>1</sup>

The combatant Commanders-in-Chief (CINCs) have a demonstrated need and the U.S. Coast Guard is ideally suited for expeditionary naval coastal warfare (NCW).<sup>\*</sup> By virtue of its experience within the littorals, effective "jointness" with its Department of Defense (DOD) brethren, active participation in the CINCs' theater engagement and contingency operations, multi-mission capabilities, and forces--people, platforms, and command and control (C<sup>2</sup>) structure--Coast Guard forces are an excellent match to conducting NCW missions within the spectrum of conflict up to and including low intensity conflict (LIC). A Joint Force Commander (JFC) needs the Coast Guard to lead and execute his or her NCW mission, thereby freeing up other joint forces for "front line" operations and achieving unity of effort.

In the past twenty years, the Coast Guard's law enforcement and marine safety missions captured and retained the public spotlight, relegating its national defense mission to a lower priority for resources and training. In 1980, maritime defense zone (MDZ) commands were created and charged with the primary mission of homeland defense protection against potential Soviet incursions of our military and commercial ports. With the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1990, this threat retreated and the United States became the naval superpower without a maritime peer competitor. As a result, MDZ commands saw their charter role dissipate, only to be resurrected when Operation Desert Shield/Desert Storm

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<sup>\*</sup> For brevity, NCW will be used in this paper to denote naval coastal warfare. This is not to be confused with network centric warfare, for which the U.S. Navy uses the same acronym.

validated a continuing need for expeditionary NCW forces."<sup>2</sup> Despite this progress, the Coast Guard's success in promoting its national defense capabilities and its role in expeditionary maritime security was marginal at best. Today, with interest in homeland defense and the shift from fighting the Cold War to regional threats, the Coast Guard's national defense mission is receiving more "illumination".

The intent of this research paper is to shed additional "light" on the Coast Guard's present capabilities and limitations in the expeditionary NCW mission area and enlighten present and future operational commanders to the importance of integrating the fifth military service with its DOD counterparts, thereby increasing Coast Guard presence within the "joint" community.

#### **THEATER CINCs NEED THE COAST GUARD FOR NCW**

"CINC, U.S. European Command and Commander, U.S. Naval Forces, European Command have developed requirements for Coast Guard forces. Both want the service to support the maritime component of their theater engagement strategy...USEUCOM has a continuing requirement for Coast Guard support of contingency plans for coastal sea control, harbor defense, and port security."

- Vice Admiral James Loy, USCG and Captain Bruce Stubbs, USCG<sup>3</sup>

The Navy Department's ...*From the Sea* (1992), *Forward...From the Sea* (1994), and *Forward...From the Sea: The Navy Operational Concept* (1997) collectively establish the vision for U.S. naval forces in the post-Cold War era. Containing words such as joint and combined operations, operating forward, and power projection, these documents describe the ways in which U.S. naval forces will Shape-Respond-Prepare Now to combat national security threats. Although discussing the changing nature of conflict and the potential for an asymmetric threat response, they focus primarily on the need for changing the way our naval offensive capabilities are employed. In short, providing vision for a new way of doing business with the Navy's high-end assets.

What is missing is the vision for low-end naval assets. The potential need to use military forces to enforce economic sanctions, the potential need to conduct peacekeeping operations, and the potential need to protect the coastal installations of our allies and future coalition partners require us to examine the United States' entire expeditionary force capability and find ways to reduce critical vulnerabilities. "This is vital to operational commanders--especially in littoral operations and operations other than war--in planning and executing nearly every operation where vessels other than combatants are transiting the waters."<sup>4</sup> Fortunately, the littorals are an area where the Coast Guard has the experience, flexibility, and "teeth" to complement high-end DOD assets.<sup>5</sup>

...*From the Sea* touches on this, identifying sealift as a key enabler for joint operations and identifying the potential for Coast Guard involvement. Protection of our sealift assets is vital to our success as "sea lines of communication carry more than 95 percent of the logistic support for forward-deployed forces...Although vessels are vulnerable throughout their voyage, that vulnerability is greatest in the transition area between "blue water" (deep oceans and seas) and "brown water" (coastal regions) and at [the] points of origin and destination."<sup>6</sup> This transition area is the Coast Guard's backyard: its units play there everyday.

As America elected to spend the Cold War peace-dividend at home, the Navy sought to increase efficiencies and maximize the use of declining defense funds by improving the multi-mission capabilities of its high-end combatants. As less capable ships are being decommissioned to save money, the Navy is losing the flexibility it professes is necessary for future success. In essence it is finding itself between the "rocks" of limited defense dollars and the uncharted "shoals" of asymmetric warfare.



Fewer combatants, although highly capable, equate to less forward presence and a net loss when conflict ensues. "If you lose a multi-mission platform, the impact on your overall warfighting capability [is more significant] with the remainder of the force."<sup>7</sup> Then CNO ADM Jay Johnson correctly identified the situation in late summer 1999 and recommended a way out: "the Navy must consider increasing the size of its fleet to further diminish the threat of an attack along a coast...Simply put, numbers do matter."<sup>8</sup> While defense spending is likely to rise with the pro-defense Bush administration, it will likely not be enough to support both a significant increase in the number of combatants and the development of a theater missile defense system. The "rocks and shoals" will still exist. Admiral James Loy, the Coast Guard's current Commandant recently observed, "In the [Cold War] era of a 600-ship Navy, 40 or so Coast Guard cutters were a virtual afterthought. But today with regional instability and strife around the world and 116 surface combatants in the Navy, [our 41major] cutters along with several hundred coastal patrol boats take on a new significance."<sup>9</sup> This statement demonstrates that Coast Guard resources can help fulfill the low-end role.

The CINCs have identified these deficiencies as well and are seeking ways to fill the gaps. A 1992 research study on 21<sup>st</sup> century Coast Guard roles and missions asked them the following: "What specialized service could the CG perform for DOD in the next century, and is there a gap in DOD capabilities that the Coast Guard could fill?" The responses ranged from consolidating the Navy's naval control of the shipping mission into the MDZ [maritime defense zone] command structure to assuming responsibilities for "the low end of the high-low mix of ships." Additional responses addressed providing capabilities for which the Navy does not have sufficient resources, and presence in low threat areas.<sup>10</sup> Seven years later, the Joint Interagency Task Force on Roles and Missions of the United States Coast Guard

[hereafter referred to as ' Interagency Task Force'], established by then-President Clinton to "provide advice and recommendations regarding the appropriate roles and missions for the United States Coast Guard through the year 2020,"<sup>11</sup> validated this continuing need for Coast Guard involvement, and concluded, "The National Security Strategy and the conclusions of the Quadrennial Defense Review require forces capable of fighting and winning two nearly simultaneous Major Theater Wars. To effect that strategy, the war-fighting Commanders-in-Chief have incorporated and depend upon Coast Guard assets for their war plans."<sup>12</sup>

In summation, the CINCs are depending on Coast Guard forces--as key partners in the larger joint USN/USCG harbor defense/port security organization currently in place--to fulfill the vision in *Forward...From the Sea* that "... U.S. naval forces will assume critical roles in the protection of vital sealift along the strategic lines of approach to the theater of conflict, including the air- and sea-ports of debarkation."<sup>13</sup> The Coast Guard is ready to respond: permitting the U.S. to project a "seamless" joint force, filling a critical role in protecting U.S power projection capabilities, and freeing up additional combatants for offensive use.

## **HISTORY OF COAST GUARD OPERATIONS IN THE LITTORALS**

"By law and by culture, the Coast Guard is an armed service, with a history of military operations that recently passed the two century mark. The nature of those operations have changed over the years, but the military character has endured to provide a cohesive organizational identity and unique national utility in all of its roles."

- Joint Interagency Task Force on Roles and Missions of the United States Coast Guard <sup>14</sup>

The U.S. Coast Guard, with its origins in U.S. Revenue Cutter Service, has conducted national defense operations since 1790 and served as the nation's only at-sea armed force until the U.S. Navy was reestablished in 1798. Since then, cutters have seen extensive service in littoral combat operations [see Appendix]. Coast Guard involvement in four recent

joint, expeditionary NCW contingency operations exemplifies the service's national defense capabilities.

During Operation Desert Shield/Desert Storm, the Coast Guard protected seaports of embarkation (SPOE) in the United States. In addition, U.S. Central Command established a port security/harbor defense command utilizing three PSUs whose mission was "...to establish comprehensive surveillance and port security activities in support of large-scale logistics operations in two strategic Persian Gulf ports of embarkation [in] Saudi Arabia and security operations at critical command-and-control facilities and vessels at the port in Bahrain."<sup>15</sup> Coast Guard law enforcement detachments (LEDETs) also played a major role in supporting United Nations (UN) sanctions against Iraq, conducting or supporting "approximately 60 percent of the 600 boardings carried out by U.S. forces."<sup>16</sup> Coast Guard LEDETs continue this mission today.

In 1994, during operations ABLE MANNER and ABLE VIGIL, "An afloat Coast Guard task force commander...working closely with Navy and other Defense Department assets...directed [migrant interdiction] operations for the largest fleet of cutters since World War II."<sup>17</sup> During operation UPHOLD DEMOCRACY that same year, the Coast Guard enforced the United Nations (UN) embargo and later deployed harbor defense command units (HDCUs) and port security units (PSUs) in Port-au-Prince and Cap Haitian to provide waterborne port security. In addition, an oceangoing buoy tender provided AtoN services in Port-au-Prince harbor, further facilitating the offload of strategic sealift assets to support the multi-national forces.<sup>18</sup> The bottom line: "...cutters formed the backbone of the UN embargo around Haiti and were a "team player" in the joint operations we conducted there."<sup>19</sup>

How then does the Coast Guard's past experiences position it for success in the present?

## COAST GUARD CONTRIBUTIONS TO NCW

"The Coast Guard has a long history of conducting national defense missions, and clearly its special capabilities are as well suited to the national defense missions of the next century as they were in 1790." - Joint Interagency Task Force on Roles and Missions of the United States Coast Guard<sup>20</sup>

### Strengths

...*From the Sea* states, "The [Navy's] Expeditionary Force Package can operate with other elements of joint or combined task forces, including...Coast Guard assets, reserve forces in contributory support, [and] allied forces and assets."<sup>21</sup> The key to effective utilization of these Coast Guard assets--and for that matter all forces--in NCW operations is cooperation for "unity of effort can only be achieved through close, continuous interagency and interdepartmental coordination..."<sup>22</sup> The responsibility for this coordination lies with the joint forces commander (JFC) yet "Joint force commanders frequently state that interagency coordination is one of their biggest challenges."<sup>23</sup> To achieve unity of effort, the Coast Guard' has developed finely tuned interagency coordination skills over an extensive history of law enforcement and expeditionary warfare.

The origins of this capability began in 1915 when President Woodrow Wilson signed into law Senate Bill 2337, combining the U.S. Revenue Cutter Service and the U.S. Lifesaving Service to create today's Coast Guard.<sup>24</sup> Since then, Coast Guard peacetime roles and missions have expanded from customs duties and search and rescue to include marine safety, marine inspection, marine environmental protection, drug enforcement and migrant interdiction, to name a few. Each of these missions requires extensive coordination between several federal, state, and local agencies (e.g. the U.S. Customs Service, the U.S. Border

Patrol, state fish and wildlife agencies, local port authorities, etc.) on a daily basis. With respect to DOD, this interaction exists within the Navy-Coast Guard (NAVWARD) Board.

Building on its history of joint operations with the Navy and recognizing the potential for increased efficiencies, the Navy-Coast Guard (NAVWARD) Board was established in 1980 to address policy issues between the two services. One of its first achievements was the Department of Transportation /Department of Navy Agreement of 1984 which designated the Maritime Defense Zones (MDZ Atlantic and Pacific) as the Fleet CINCs' echelon III Navy commands responsible for planning, exercising, and conducting CONUS NCW operations. While the threat justifying the original MDZ mission dissipated with the end of the Cold War, Operation Desert Shield/Storm validated a continuing need for expeditionary NCW forces to conduct Harbor Defense/Port Security missions.<sup>25</sup> In 1993 the NAVWARD board "...evaluated the Coast Guard's national defense missions and determined three areas in which the Coast Guard would focus in the future."<sup>26</sup> Its efforts resulted in the 1995 DOD-DOT MOA on the Use of U.S. Coast Guard Capabilities and Resources in Support of the National Military Strategy. The MOA now defines four missions, detailed in annexes to the MOA, where Coast Guard core competencies can contribute to this nation's defense.<sup>27</sup> The creation of the NAVWARD board and the 1995 DOD-DOT MOA have significantly improved DOD understanding of assets and benefits that the USCG brings to the "joint" table. Coast Guard-DOD interoperability, however, is not all that the CG brings to the "joint" table.

The same skills that make it an effective partner with DOD are equally well suited for Coast Guard interoperability with other nations. Two recent articles support this point:

"The USCG has a distinctive international role and appeal, as many of the world's maritime nations have similar forces and conduct missions that closely align with those of the USCG."<sup>28</sup>

"The Coast Guard can participate with ease in smaller-scale international contingency operations when other U.S. agencies might not be welcome...Because of its more benign character, the Coast Guard is usually accepted by foreign nonmilitary institutions and civil authorities, whereas the other U.S. armed forces might be perceived as a threat. It can deploy into areas where other representation--from either the United States or its closest allies--might be at the least unwelcome and at worst highly provocative. The Coast Guard can also "speak the language" of both civil and military organizations--an important capability as the United States looks to civil entities for assistance and expertise in dealing with complex transnational and nontraditional missions..."<sup>29</sup>

This ability to project a "good guy" or "white hat" persona coupled with its ability to interact effectively with both civilian and military organizations can have a profound effect on mission success. For example, during Operation Uphold Democracy a U.S. Navy ship was prevented from mooring in Port-au-Prince harbor yet the Coast Guard "...was able to keep open an important communications channel to Haitian political and security officials."<sup>30</sup>

Recognizing this trait, the 1997 National Defense Panel recommended that the Department of Defense and the Coast Guard "move to establish appropriate MOAs with the regional CINCs to more closely couple Coast Guard international activities to CINCs regional stability programs."<sup>31</sup> By continually building international relationships through theater engagement operations, the Coast Guard positions itself as an effective "force enabler" for allied and coalition involvement in future NCW contingency operations. This capability is vital to successful interaction with a host nation: assuring and maintaining access to its ports, harbors, and coastal waters.

The Coast Guard therefore brings vast, applicable peacetime skills and experience to the NCW operating area. Its ability to cooperate--its jointness, the glue that binds joint NCW

forces together--is the first of several strengths that the Coast Guard possesses. The NCW command and control (C<sup>2</sup>) organization is the second.

The Forward to *Naval Command and Control* (NDP 6) describes C<sup>2</sup> as "...the tool the naval commander uses to cope with the uncertainty of combat and to direct his forces to accomplish the assigned mission."<sup>32</sup> Utilizing highly effective C<sup>2</sup> skills and layered, multi-unit tactics proven in the Vietnam War<sup>33</sup>, today's Coast Guard surface units and aircraft work extensively together to conduct missions. Two recent examples, a successful drug seizure<sup>34</sup> and the joint operations off Vieques, Puerto Rico,<sup>35</sup> serve to demonstrate that Coast Guard leaders, performing at the operational level, consistently achieve the unity of effort necessary for success in NCW operations.

Within the NCW community this skill is demonstrated by the harbor defense command (HDC) unit, a joint USN-USCG manned command center that provides operational and tactical C<sup>2</sup> to the rest of the force.<sup>36</sup> HDCs--the "heart" of the NCW expeditionary force package--coordinate their efforts with the host nation, the coastal sea-control commander (if assigned), and the joint rear area coordinator (if assigned).<sup>37</sup> At the tip of the 'operational' spear, their efforts to combine jointness and C<sup>2</sup> are crucial to achieving unity of effort.

The third significant strength of the Coast Guard, as with most organizations, is its people. The manning of NCW units is divided between active and reserve components, with PSUs and HDCs being largely supported by reserve personnel and WHECs, WMECs, WPBs, and LEDETs being provided by active duty personnel.<sup>38</sup> With the Coast Guard's recent consolidation of reserve units with their active duty counterparts, "over 92 percent of our [Coast Guard] selective reservists report directly to active duty commands. The remaining 8

percent train in deployable contingency units [such as PSUs and HDCUs].<sup>39</sup> The Coast Guard now has tremendous flexibility in meeting its commitments to the CINCs. With relatively short notice, we can tailor an optimum mix of resources from the available pool of active and Reserve personnel, a task not as easy to accomplish prior to integration."<sup>40</sup>

Two recently created joint NCW groups further combined both Coast Guard and Navy reserve units under a single, unified 'national' NCW umbrella. Commanded by Navy Reserve captains and staffed by both Navy and Coast Guard Reserve personnel, including two Coast Guard Reserve rear admirals, these NCW groups work closely with the numbered USN amphibious groups and USCG MDZ commands to prepare for and execute the nation's NCW mission.<sup>41</sup> In short, the Navy and Coast Guard people, working together, build upon the first two strengths to achieve unity of effort and thereby make the NCW force effective.

Cost effectiveness is the final enduring Coast Guard strength discussed. By virtue of its peacetime missions paralleling NCW missions, the Coast Guard trains for conflict while conducting day-to-day peacetime operations. By integrating CG reserve personnel into active duty units for peacetime training and operations, and working closely with the Navy to integrate USN-USCG forces into an effective, multi-dimensional harbor defense/port security (HD/PS) organization, the Coast Guard achieves economy of effort at the lowest cost possible. The resulting non-redundancy further promotes unit of effort in the NCW arena.

In summation, today's multi-mission Coast Guard--its people, platforms, and C<sup>2</sup> organization--provides unique, specialized capabilities to the littoral battle space. Synergistic, cost-effective capabilities that promote unity of effort between joint NCW forces.



## Vulnerabilities

With strengths, come vulnerabilities. This is even more so when discussing the Coast Guard's "low-end" role in the high-low mix of naval assets. In a 1990 paper titled "*Semper Paratus? The Coast Guard is Not Equipped to Fight*", LCDR William L. Ross, USCG stated "Forty-four years after [the] order for general demobilization [following World War II], the Coast Guard's major operational platforms--surface and air--possess little to no warfighting capability (or even survivability) for a contemporary conventional war or low-intensity conflict (LIC)." Current Coast Guard assets were designed and built during peacetime with the attendant focus on regulatory, law enforcement and marine safety issues.<sup>42</sup> From the conventional war perspective, present day threats of anti-ship missiles, hostile submarines, and weapons of mass destruction (WMD) would lead one to agree. Weapon suites aboard even the "most capable" Coast Guard cutters are clearly no match for those found on AEGIS destroyers and other high-end naval assets.<sup>43</sup> It is in the realm of LIC and lower levels in the spectrum of conflict, however, that the hostile threats mentioned earlier change.

Joint Publication 1-02 defines LIC as "a political-military confrontation between contending states or groups below conventional war and above the routine, peaceful competition among states."<sup>44</sup> Framed in this context, the Coast Guard, with its multi-mission character, is indeed relevant. It has been involved with LIC since its inception in 1790. From Operation Uphold Democracy on one end to boating safety boardings on the other, today's Coast Guard continues to operate within the LIC spectrum.

The Interagency Task Force recognized the Coast Guard's benefit to the nation in LIC operations, stating, "While cutters are not suitable for combat operations in a multi-threat arena, they are well suited for certain rear area operations and provide the Naval Commander

flexibility in assigning higher threat missions to his multi-mission Navy surface combatants."<sup>45</sup> The second part of this statement validates the need for low-end naval assets, such as Coast Guard cutters, as force multipliers in time of conflict. With initiatives such as the National Fleet concept, Navy and Coast Guard officials continue work together in closing the high-end/low-end gap,<sup>46</sup> mitigating the very weakness proposed by LCDR Ross and turning it into strength. With LIC as the limiting factor, what then are the potential NCW threats?

A discussion of vulnerabilities would be incomplete without considering enemy capabilities and potential courses of action. It is widely recognized that Coast Guard assets, outfitted primarily with shorter range, smaller caliber weapons systems, have extremely limited offensive reach for surface and air threats and near-zero capability to counter subsurface threats.<sup>47</sup> In conventional war they are highly vulnerable to standoff attack from hostile forces. Reduce the threat level to LIC and add today's likely potential for an asymmetric threat response from our enemies, however, and the Coast Guard suddenly has some "teeth".

The HD/PS organization possesses robust capabilities to counter both small boat and subsurface intrusion attempts. The harbor approach defense (HAD) cutters and patrol boats can effectively protect high value units (HVAs) from limited surface threats as well. Operating under the NCW umbrella, Navy mine countermeasures aircraft and ships will likely carry the bulk of the MCM effort but this may not be enough.<sup>48</sup> If faced with a shortage of organic MCM assets, Coast Guard buoy tenders and 110 WPBs--space and weight limitations permitting--with their differential GPS receivers could be quickly outfitted to serve as vessels of opportunity to expand the effort<sup>49</sup> In concert with the strengths already

discussed, Coast Guard cutters can provide force protection for these assets<sup>50</sup> In sum, Coast Guard assets possess limited vulnerabilities within the LIC spectrum. Where deficient, however, they can complement and sometimes supplement USN assets assigned to the task and maintain unity of effort.

### **Asset Availability: A Limitation?**

"The single greatest contribution the Coast Guard can make to jointness is perhaps its most difficult to deliver. The demand for Coast guard assets regularly outstrips available resources."  
- Captain Alexander J. Hindle, Jr., USCG (Ret.)<sup>51</sup>

The 1999 CNA study mentioned earlier reported that Coast Guard forces are presently engaged in service to the combatant CINCs. It also identified the following Coast Guard assets as important to CINC contingency and theater engagement plans:

**Table 1: Importance of Coast Guard Assets to CINCs**  
(Top 3 in Priority Order)

<u>Theater Engagement Plans</u>	<u>Contingency Operations</u>
Cutters Mobile Training Teams Law Enforcement Detachments	Port Security <sup>1</sup> Maritime Interception & Environmental Response (tie) Littoral Escort

<sup>1</sup> Virtually everyone interviewed identified port security as the most important Coast Guard contribution for anticipated contingency operations.

**Source:** Center for Naval Analyses, U.S. Coast Guard Support for the CINCs: Current and Future Relationships Overseas, CAB 99-100 (Alexandria, VA: December 1999): 52, 92.

In addition, it identified the following Coast Guard involvement with the unified CINCs' theater engagement plan (TEP) operations in 1999 along with Coast Guard assets earmarked in the Joint Strategic Capabilities Plan (JSCP) for use in contingency operations:

**Table 2: Current (1999) Coast Guard Asset Employment/Availability**

	Actual Engagement Operations				Contingency Operations			
	HEC/MEC <sup>1</sup>	PSU <sup>2</sup>	LEDET <sup>2</sup>	MTT <sup>2</sup>	HEC <sup>3</sup>	MEC <sup>3</sup>	110 WPB <sup>3</sup>	PSU <sup>3</sup>
<b>SOUTHCOM</b>	181	--	18.5	25	12	29	49	6
<b>PACOM</b>	551	1	8.5	17				
<b>JFCOM</b>	--	--	2	--				
<b>EUCOM</b>	181	--	--	17				
<b>CENTCOM</b>	105	2	2	17				

Notes: <sup>1</sup> Operations in actual forward support of CINCs, expressed in number of Days Away from Homeport (DAHP). In 1999, the Coast Guard's major cutter employment limit (for each cutter) was 185 DAHP.

<sup>2</sup> Number of deployments.

<sup>3</sup> Total number of assets available. Actual numbers apportioned to each combatant CINC are classified. Virtually the entire USCG inventory of major forces is apportioned to the CINCs for contingency operations.

Source: Center for Naval Analyses, U.S. Coast Guard Support for the CINCs: Current and Future Relationships Overseas, CAB 99-100 (Alexandria, VA: December 1999): 26-30.

Analyzing the data contained in these tables, two key points emerge. First, Coast Guard major cutters (WHECs and WMECs) contributed to the CINCs only 13% (or ~5.5 cutters) of their 1999 total available DAHP. Out of that number, 370 cutter days (~2.5 cutters) were allocated for direct out of hemisphere (OOH) deployments in support of CINC TEPs.<sup>52</sup> The remaining conducted CG law enforcement missions under JIATF East or West OPLAN. Three cutters, out of 25 (41 if you consider the WMEC-210s) is a low number considering these cutters are the CINCs' #1 desire for Coast Guard participation in theater engagement and well suited for the CINCs' maritime interdiction and littoral escort missions during contingency operations. Second, with the exceptions of SOUTCOM and PACOM where they typically remain under Coast Guard operational control, Coast Guard 110-foot patrol boats (110 WPBs) are not engaged in CINC directed theater engagement operations. Likewise, these cutters are on the JSCP "hook" for contingency operations and are well suited for the CINCs' maritime interdiction and littoral escort missions. The impression is

that Coast Guard assets, although employed in CINC theater engagement and considered in CINC contingency plans, are underutilized with respect to the NCW mission.

The reason for this is simple: asset availability--the very thing the Coast Guard offers to navigate the Navy through the "rocks and shoals" mentioned earlier. At present, Coast Guard cutters are fully engaged in law enforcement at home and our civilian leaders as late as 1997 had difficulty understanding why the Coast Guard should deploy overseas at all.<sup>53</sup> For example, "in 1987 a proposed deployment of 110 WPBs to the Persian Gulf was cancelled in the face of considerable political backlash, despite the obvious utility of the boats in the conflict."<sup>54</sup> Likewise during the Gulf War, WHECs and WMEC-270s did not deploy, presumably due to their being fully engaged in law enforcement operations in the western hemisphere.<sup>55</sup> The civilian leadership's myopic vision of Coast Guard cutter utility overseas is getting better, however, thanks in large part to the efforts of the Interagency Task Force.

In addition to seeking a review of all Coast Guard roles and missions, then-President Clinton directed the Interagency Task Force to give "special attention" to the deepwater missions of the Coast Guard. The Executive Order defined deepwater missions as those occurring beyond fifty (50) nautical miles from U.S. shores.<sup>56</sup> In its final report, the Interagency Task Force concluded "...we have a composite Navy and Coast Guard maritime defense organization capable of conducting coastal warfare and harbor defense as an element of expeditionary littoral warfare, based on operational principles refined through real and exercise operations. Today, the U.S. Naval Coastal Warfare (NCW) program and community are undergoing significant additional evolution that will further improve capabilities."<sup>57</sup> Part of that evolution is the Coast Guard's Integrated Deepwater Systems (IDS) recapitalization

project, a system-of-systems approach to designing and building the next generation of Coast Guard cutters, aircraft, and C<sup>2</sup> systems.

Congressional funding notwithstanding, "Deepwater" is the Coast Guard's answer to the asset availability dilemma. It, however, may not be enough as the Coast Guard's developing role in homeland defense has the potential to draw away the additional resources "Deepwater" may provide.<sup>58</sup> Like the other military services, the Coast Guard cannot do all that it is asked to do--at the same time--without additional resources. So what is the answer? The purpose here is not to justify increased Coast Guard budgets to build systems for the future but rather to demonstrate that the Coast Guard is capable of conducting the NCW mission today. It is the capability that matters. This capability, however, comes with a price: the loss of available assets for other missions. It is left to this nation's leaders to conduct the cost-benefit analysis when the need for NCW contingency operations arrives.

In the end, the Coast Guard's NCW strengths outweigh its vulnerabilities, confirming the fact that the Coast Guard's trait of effectively fostering and achieving unity of effort is, indeed, its greatest, overarching strength.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

Based on this research, the following recommendations are offered:

- The Coast Guard as a service should utilize every resource opportunity available to engage with its DOD counterparts and potential allied and coalition nations to maintain and expand not only its access to future partners but its interagency coordination skills as well. Efforts such as this have the potential for reaping far greater returns in future contingency operations.

- Coast Guard cutters (WHECs, WMECs, and 110 WPBs) should be included in every available NCW exercise to increase the awareness of the NCW mission and its C<sup>2</sup> organization through the Coast Guard fleet.

## CONCLUSIONS

Albeit with some limitations, the Coast Guard can and does conduct expeditionary NCW operations today. Some may say "So what? The Coast Guard has been doing this mission for several years now. What's new?" Granted, the recent terrorist attack on the USS COLE created yet another DOD request for a Coast Guard PSU. Responding in typical "Semper Paratus" (always ready) fashion, the Coast Guard rapidly deploying one to the region. The Coast Guard's NCW capabilities, however, are not limited to only PSUs--the Coast Guard offers much more. From peacetime through regional LICs, its resources, organization and people offer a robust and flexible force multiplier NCW capability to the theater CINCs. Expeditionary Coast Guard forces provide a credible "white hat" presence to promote de-escalation during contingencies and to develop increased interoperability with allies and potential coalition partners during peacetime engagement. It's interagency coordination prowess leads to highly effective unity of effort, a vital component to assure NCW success. Furthermore, Coast Guard personnel possess the skills and experience necessary to lead NCW operations. They practice them every day while protecting our shores from illegal drugs and migrants and promoting maritime safety and security in our ports. Time and again, since the founding of our nation, the Coast Guard has exemplified its motto "Semper Paratus": Always Ready for national defense missions. It is ready for NCW today!

## APPENDIX: COAST GUARD SERVICE IN LITTORAL COMBAT OPERATIONS

- Quasi-War with France - maritime interdiction
- War of 1812 - surface warfare and maritime interdiction
- Seminole Indians War - riverine operations, amphibious landings and blockade
- War with Mexico - blockade and amphibious landings
- Civil War - blockade, riverine operations, naval gun fire support
- Spanish-American War - surface warfare, naval gun fire support, search and rescue (SAR), beach patrol
- World War I - anti-submarine warfare escort, maritime interdiction, SAR, beach patrol
- World War II - anti-submarine warfare escort, amphibious landings, SAR, beach patrol, port security, vessel safety, and LORAN duty
- Korean War - port security, vessel safety, and LORAN duty
- Vietnam War - maritime and riverine interdiction, port safety and security, aids to navigation (AtoN), and merchant shipping coordination.<sup>59</sup>

"In each case where Coast Guard forces worked for or with the Navy, they provided specialized skills needed by the Naval Commander or were able to adapt to specific tasking as required. During the Quasi-War with France in 1798, for example, chasing down small, fast vessels was a skill the cutters honed in peacetime, and adopting it to wartime operations against privateering vessels was an easy mission match. In World War II, Coast Guard [coxswains] operating Navy landing craft was [sic] an efficient utilization of skills developed in peacetime small-boat stations around the country. With the War of 1812, augmenting the Navy with shallow-draft craft became a one of the services primary wartime missions."<sup>60</sup>



## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Vice Admiral Thomas Fargo, USN and Rear Admiral Ernest Riutta, USCG, "A 'National Fleet' for America," U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings (April 1999): 50.

<sup>2</sup> "NCW Units and Commands." Role of the Maritime Defense Zone Commander. 1 November 2000. <[http://www.uscg.mil/lantarea/ap/tide/role\\_of\\_the\\_maritime\\_defense\\_com.htm](http://www.uscg.mil/lantarea/ap/tide/role_of_the_maritime_defense_com.htm)> [14 January 2001].

<sup>3</sup> Vice Admiral James Loy and Captain Bruce Stubbs, USCG, "Exporting Coast Guard Expertise," U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings, (May 1997): 55.

<sup>4</sup> Commander Dee Norton, USCG, "Coast Guard Isn't the Navy, but...", U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings, (December 1996): 56.

<sup>5</sup> U.S. Coast Guard, Coast Guard 2020: Ready Today...Preparing for Tomorrow (Washington, DC: 1998): 17.

<sup>6</sup> U.S. Navy Department, Naval Coastal Warfare NWP 3-10 (Rev. A) (Washington, DC: May 1998), 1-1.

<sup>7</sup> Rear Admiral Bernard Smith, quoted in Katherine McIntire Peters. "Future Fleet", Government Executive, (September 1999): 43-49. <<http://www.govexec.com/features/0999/0999s3.htm>> [14 January 2000].

<sup>8</sup> Katherine McIntire Peters. "Future Fleet."

<sup>9</sup> Vice Admiral James M. Loy, USCG, "Shaping America's Joint Maritime Forces: The Coast Guard in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century," Joint Forces Quarterly (Spring 1998): 15.

<sup>10</sup> Captain Bruce B. Stubbs, USCG, The U.S. Coast Guard's National Security Role in the Twenty-First Century (Newport, RI: Center for Naval Warfare Studies, U.S. Naval War College, 1992), 53.

<sup>11</sup> U.S. Department of Transportation, "Introduction", Joint Interagency Task Force on Roles and Missions of the United States Coast Guard. 10 February 2000. <<http://www.uscg.mil/news/chapter1.html>> [5 January 2001].

<sup>12</sup> U.S. Department of Transportation, "Conclusions", Joint Interagency Task Force on Roles and Missions of the United States Coast Guard. 10 February 2000. <<http://www.uscg.mil/news/chapter4.html>> [5 January 2001].

<sup>13</sup> U.S. Navy Department, Forward... From the Sea (Washington, D.C.: 1994), 7.

<sup>14</sup> U.S. Department of Transportation, "Strategic Goals and Mission Profiles - Maritime Security", Joint Interagency Task Force on Roles and Missions of the United States

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Coast Guard. 10 February 2000. <<http://www.uscg.mil/news/chapter2.html>> [5 January 2001].

<sup>15</sup> Captain Carmond C. Fitzgerald, USCG, and Captain John R. Olson, USCGR, "Answering the Call," U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings (Dec 1992): 94.

<sup>16</sup> "A Chronology of the U.S. Coast Guard's Involvement in the Persian Gulf War 1990-1991". Coast Guard & Desert Shield/Desert Storm. June 2000. <<http://www.uscg.mil/hq/g-cp/history/PersianGulfChron.html>> [24 January 2001].

<sup>17</sup> Captain Bruce B. Stubbs, USCG and Scott C. Truver, America's Coast Guard: Safeguarding U.S. Maritime Safety and Security in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century (Annapolis, MD: Tullier Marketing Communications, 2000): 69.

<sup>18</sup> Operation Able Manner/Uphold Democracy. <<http://www.uscg.mil/hq/g-cp/comrel/factfile/factcards/AbleManner.html>> [14 January 2001].

<sup>19</sup> U.S. Department of Transportation, "Strategic Goals and Mission Profiles - Maritime Security".

<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

<sup>21</sup> U.S. Navy Department, ... From the Sea, Preparing the Naval Service for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century (Washington, D.C.: September 1992), 6.

<sup>22</sup> U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, Interagency Coordination During Joint Operations, Joint Pub 3-08 (Washington, DC: 9 October 1996), I-5.

<sup>23</sup> General John M. Shalikashvili, USA, quoted in Forward to U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, Interagency Coordination During Joint Operations Joint Pub 3-08 (Washington, DC: 09 October 1996, inside cover.

<sup>24</sup> Bill Creating Coast Guard. March 2000. <<http://www.uscg.mil/hq/g-cp/history/USCGBill.html>> [24 January 2001].

<sup>25</sup> "NCW Units and Commands."

<sup>26</sup> Caryn Goebel, "Defining What's Always Been: Navy, Coast Guard Agree on Wartime Roles and Missions," Navy Times, 16 October 1995, 20.

<sup>27</sup> U.S. Department of Defense and U.S. Department of Transportation, "Memorandum of Agreement Between the Department of Defense and the Department of Transportation on the Use of U.S. Coast Guard Capabilities and Resources in Support of the National Military Strategy," (Washington, DC; 1995): 1.

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<sup>28</sup> "United States Coast Guard: International Engagement and Involvement in Security Assistance," DISAM Journal (Fall 1998): 1.

<sup>29</sup> T.D. Kilvert-Jones, "An Active and Acceptable Presence: The U.S. Coast Guard and International Engagement," Sea Power, (December 1999): 47.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, 49.

<sup>31</sup> National Defense Panel, Transforming Defense--National Security in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, (Arlington, VA: 1997): 31-32.

<sup>32</sup> Admiral J.M. Boorda, USN and General C.E. Mundy, Jr., USMC, quoted in Forward to U.S. Navy Department, Naval Command and Control Naval Doctrine Publication 6 (Washington, DC: 19 May 1995, i.

<sup>33</sup> Center for Naval Analyses, Naval Studies Group, Market Time: Countering Sea-Borne Infiltration in South Viet Nam, Operations Evaluation Group Study No. 706 (Alexandria, VA: 1966): 7.

<sup>34</sup> In January 2001, between the Bahamas and Cuba, a 270-foot WMEC, three 110 WPBs, a CG HH-60 helicopter and a CG C-130 aircraft conducted a nine-hour chase of a small "go fast" vessel attempting to smuggle drugs into the U.S. This CG only surface action group (SAG) successfully interdicted the vessel by maintaining aerial surveillance as it attempted to evade by transiting inside Cuban territorial seas and employing "wolf pack" tactics to position the patrol boats. [Source: Jack Dorsey, "Portsmouth Based Cutter Aids in High-speed Drug Raid," The Virginia Pilot, 17 January 2001, <<http://www.pilotonline.com/military/ml0117.am.html>> [20 January 2000].

<sup>35</sup> Recently in May 2000, Coast Guard forces worked closely with federal agents, the U.S. Navy and U.S. Marine Corps forces during operation EASTERN ACCESS to evict hundreds of trespassers on the Navy's bombing range on Vieques Island, Puerto Rico and establish a three-mile temporary security zone for follow-on live fire exercises. Military forces totaling two 210-foot WMECs, eight 110-foot WPBs, four helicopters and five Navy coastal warfare craft were led by a Coast Guard O-6 as the SAG commander aboard the USS NASHVILLE. [Sources: Lieutenant Commander Ron LaBrec, USCG and Public Affairs Specialist Third Class Rob Suddarth. "Coast Guard Units Support Navy's Live Fire Exercise off Puerto Rico." Coastline. July 2000. <<http://www.uscg.mil/d7/d7dpa/coastline/issues/july/1c.htm>> [19 January 2001] and Lieutenant Commander Ron LaBrec, USCG and Public Affairs Specialist Third Class Rob Suddarth. "Struggle for Vieques." Coast Guard Bulletin. July 2000. <<http://www.uscg.mil/hq/g-cp/cb/july2000/vieques.html>> [19 January 2001].

<sup>36</sup> Depending on the JTF organizational structure and mission requirements, Harbor Defense Commands may serve under or as the defacto NCW commander, directly subordinate to the naval component commander (NCC). If there is a requirement to protect

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more than one port, a naval coastal warfare group (NCWG) may be deployed to coordinate all HDC actions. [Source: U.S. Navy Department, Naval Coastal Warfare:1-7,1-8.]

<sup>37</sup> Ibid., 1-7,1-8.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid., 1-2.

<sup>39</sup> Rear Admiral Thomas J. Barrett, USCG, "Coast Guard: A View from the Bridge," The Officer (January-February 1998): 66.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid., 69.

<sup>41</sup> Captain Wayne Buchanan, USCG, Chief, U.S. Coast Guard Operations Plans & Policy Directorate (G-OPD), telephone conversation with author, 10 January 2001.

<sup>42</sup> Lieutenant Commander William L. Ross, USCG "Semper Paratus? The Coast Guard is Not Equipped to Fight," Naval War College Review (Winter 1990): 114.

<sup>43</sup> U.S. Navy Department, Naval Coastal Warfare, B-B-2.

<sup>44</sup> U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, Department of Defense Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms Joint Pub 1-02 (Washington, DC: 23 March 1994), 270.

<sup>45</sup> U.S. Department of Transportation, "Strategic Goals and Mission Profiles - Maritime Security".

<sup>46</sup> U.S. Coast Guard, U.S. Coast Guard: Strategic Plan 1999 (Washington, DC: 1999): 32.

<sup>47</sup> James D. Hessman, L. Edgar Prina, and Admiral Robert E. Kramek, USCG, "To Support the Warfighting CINCs," Sea Power (August 1996): 10.

<sup>48</sup> Katherine McIntire Peters. "Future Fleet".

<sup>49</sup> Lieutenant Commander Stanley J. Norman, USCG, "Prepared for Mine Warfare?" U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings (February 1983): 65.

<sup>50</sup> U.S. Navy Department, Naval Coastal Warfare, 1-4.

<sup>51</sup> Captain Alexander J. Hindle, Jr., USCG (Ret.), "Coast Guard is Joint," U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings (December 1998): 32.

<sup>52</sup> Center for Naval Analyses, U.S. Coast Guard Support for the CINCs: Current and Future Relationships Overseas, CAB 99-100 (Alexandria, VA: December 1999), 38.

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<sup>53</sup> Loy and Stubbs, "Exporting Coast Guard Expertise," 57.

<sup>54</sup> Lieutenant R.B. Watts, USCG, "Let Us Not Forsake Military Ops," U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings (December 1991): 57.

<sup>55</sup> Author's personal knowledge, having served as Weapons Officer on USCGC LEGARE (WMEC 912) during the Gulf War.

<sup>56</sup> U.S. Department of Transportation, "Introduction."

<sup>57</sup> U.S. Department of Transportation, "Conclusions."

<sup>58</sup> Ibid.

<sup>59</sup> "Military Readiness." U.S. Coast Guard: A Historical Overview. January 1999. <[http://www.uscg.mil/hq/g-cp/history/h\\_USCGhistory.html](http://www.uscg.mil/hq/g-cp/history/h_USCGhistory.html)> [24 January 2001].

<sup>60</sup> Robert Scheina. The Coast Guard at War. January 1999. <[http://www.uscg.mil/hq/g-cp/history/h\\_CGatwar.html](http://www.uscg.mil/hq/g-cp/history/h_CGatwar.html)> [24 January 2001].

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